

Red China Takes Its Time Freeing 3, Blasts 'Spies'

HONG KONG, Tuesday, Sept. 14 (U).—Red China harped today on American espionage while taking its time about freeing three Americans, prompting speculation it would denounce them as spies.

American officials waited in vain at the crossing from China for two reporters and a sea captain whom Peking had promised to release after eighteen months of captivity. They were Richard Applegate, Don Dixon and Capt. Ben Krasner.

They were expected at any time on the train from Canton, in line with the official Communist report that they were being "expelled" from China.

Officials suspected that the wording of the statement and the propaganda barrage against American agents in China might mean the Reds would try to save face by calling their action an ouster of "spies."

Would Save Face

Peking broadcast what it called a full indictment of eight alleged spies for the United States, saying the alleged ring-leader, Hugh Francis Redmond, of New York, has confessed all the charges.

The Reds already had reported Mr. Redmond was sentenced to life imprisonment, two Chinese to death, and five to prison terms. Now they said "confessions in Mr. Redmond's handwriting" figured in the case.

A priest here who was in jail with Mr. Redmond several months said the American was in "bad shape" last spring. Informed observers said it was

possible Mr. Redmond was dead or near death, and the Reds were covering up his condition.

The Peking "People's Daily," a voice of the Communist regime, said the case "exposed to the world the sinister intentions of the American aggressors against the Chinese people."

Part of "War Plot"

"United States espionage and sabotage against the Chinese people is a long premeditated plan and an important component of its new war plot against China," the daily said.

"They have intensified their espionage activities and spent lavishly to set up a chain of spy centers and training organizations around China. For years, United States spy organizations have tried by every means to send large numbers of agents, subversive elements and assassins into China."

It was against that backdrop that the arrival of the two reporters and the sea captain was awaited.

The American consulate had representatives at the border to meet the trains on which the Americans might normally be expected. A consulate car was assigned to bring them to the Peninsula Hotel, where reservations were made for them.

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